

- Several older structures and adjoining vacant land north of Ridge Road and west of the Railroad track offer opportunities for a mixed new development and redevelopment. A business and office park should be considered for this site.
- South of Ridge Road, the frontage on Kennedy Avenue offers opportunity for redevelopment where several older homes exist.
- Existing businesses offer excellent opportunities to expand in the downtown. The Town must promote such expansion and support financially, to the extent possible, in order to strengthen the existing business base as a resource for redevelopment.

Land Use / Zoning

The strategy for land use will have to be governed by policies that encourage and support the principal of a working, living, playing and shopping downtown. To support this vision, several land use policies will need to be instituted. For example, a higher number of floors will allow for mixed-use commercial and residential development. Higher density will allow for diversity and for the repopulation of downtown. The diversity, in turn, will create a better climate for businesses. Senior housing in the downtown provides not only convenience of shopping, but also diversifies the customer base. An artist colony or museum not only brings artists downtown to live, but also brings in visitors and patrons which support other entertainment venues.

In addition to housing and entertainment venues, the downtown will need to serve the community's social and civic needs. Appropriate uses must be allowed to support creation of a civic and artistic environment that builds social character for the town. Other amenities such as a park with walking and biking trails, a playground, 2a farmers market and an open area for concerts and festivals can also contribute to the overall revitalization of the downtown and attract additional visitors.

These developments can be linked to the Corridor and the Gateway zones with themed attractions, wayfinders, whimsical directional signs, wide trails and walks, and inviting landscaping and outdoor spaces.

Improved access, parking, and visibility for downtown are essential components to create a highly visible change to the existing landscape. Transit and public transportation that can



Farmer's Market



Integrating landscaping with existing buildings



Clock tower concept & infill development- Kennedy & Highway

bring people into Highland should be supported. Kennedy Avenue is a transportation corridor that connects Hammond, Highland, and Schererville. A potential target group that would benefit from transit access will be students at Purdue University Calumet and perhaps shoppers from other areas.

To achieve the vision for the downtown, the following future land use recommendations are made for this zone.

- Extend dense, pedestrian-scaled commercial uses north on Kennedy Avenue to LaPorte Avenue.
- Develop retail, commercial, and office uses on the east frontage of Kennedy Avenue south of the post office mixed with residential, where feasible.
- Establish new retail space to reinforce existing viable businesses. No inappropriate Chain stores.
- Target the old town residential area for redevelopment and infill.
- Develop restaurant/cultural businesses (such as a farmers market) with access to the Crosstown Trail. The existing Farmers Market will need to be supported to become an anchor for downtown.
- Encourage Outdoor dining where adequate clearance can be provided for pedestrians and emergency access.
- Create parking on the back of all development lots to support existing businesses.
- Repopulate Downtown by supporting a variety of housing types and mixes such as senior housing (200-300 Units), artist housing, and new housing developments.
- Promote development of institutional facilities and other activity generators in Downtown (i.e. Town Hall, YMCA, or museums)
- Improve the trail area and vacant industrial parcels for an active park facility with a variety of youth and family activities (the area between Garfield & Condit Avenues.)
- Support creation of public plazas and other open spaces, where possible, as a part of redevelopment, particularly at the end of the existing blocks and on the corner of Kennedy and Highway Avenues.
- Implement Main Street four-point revitalization program for Downtown.
- Seek historical status for all of Downtown. Until such designation and necessary studies are complete, impose a moratorium on the demolition of buildings in the Downtown.



Examples of pedestrian-scaled uses



Example of mixed-use buildings

In accordance with the above land use recommendations, the zoning of the Downtown should be changed to a Downtown Special District, where mixed-use and special uses can be permitted. The height restriction should be lifted to allow for a higher number of stories (3-4 stories) as well as a reduction in parking requirements for new developments.

New zoning regulations must further address mixed-use developments. These regulations need to accommodate future growth for housing, as well as business expansion that could include a professional office park, high-end condominiums, and multi-story office developments. The Special District Zoning should also support redevelopment of the Downtown as a place for shopping, entertainment, playing, and living. As such, potential uses for the Downtown should aim to increase Downtown's mix of unique specialty retail shops, quality restaurants, and quality housing while continuing to be the hub for professional office space and the center of government and finance.

Apparel and Accessories Stores

- Clothing Stores (men's, women's, children's apparel)
- Dressmaking Shops
- Costume Rental Establishments
- Furrier Shops, Custom
- Dry Cleaners
- Perfume Shops
- Home Accessories
- Jewelry Shops

Home Shops

- Furniture Stores (not rent-to-own or surplus)
- Fabric or Yarn Stores
- Interior Decorating Establishments
- Florist Shops
- Candle Stores
- Hardware Stores
- Housewares
- Kitchenware

Art and crafts Establishments

- Galleries
- Artists' Supply and Music Stores
- Antiques/Collectible Stores
- Clock or Watch Stores or Repair Shops
- Hobby Shops
- Gift Shops

Food and eating Establishments

- Bakeries or Pastry Shops
- Cafes
- Delicatessen Stores
- Diners
- Other Eating and Drinking Establishments (no drive-thru service)
- Candy Stores
- Specialty Food Stores (limited to the sale of health foods, deli products, prepared food, spices and herbs, coffees, teas, fresh meat & poultry and cheese stores)

Personal Services Establishments

- Barber Shops
- Beauty Parlors
- Health Clubs
- Dance studios and clubs

Youth Establishments

- Bicycle Stores, Rental or Repair
- Card Shops
- Coin Stores
- Game Stores
- Parks, Playground, and other Outdoor activities

Professional Services

- Medical Services
- Accounting
- Development/construction related Services (Engineers to Appraisers)

Business Support Services

- Banks (No stand alone drive through)
- Copying and Related Service Establishments
- Personnel Services

Infrastructure

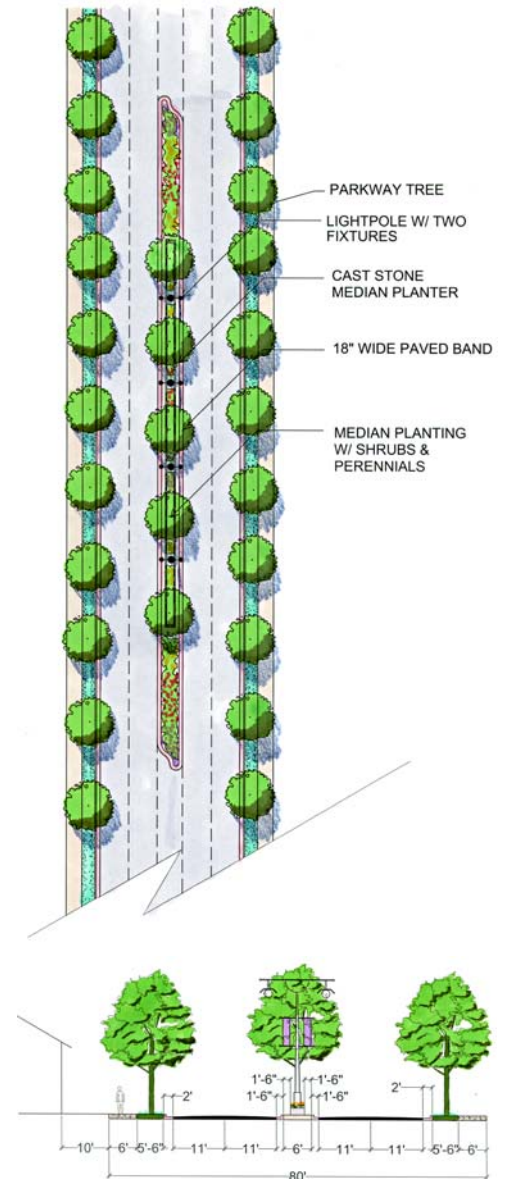
Infrastructure improvements for the Downtown zone concerns road closures and extensions to facilitate future redevelopments. Every block is also proposed to have a corner plaza. Such plazas should be incorporated in any future road improvements.

Activities proposed under this plan include the following:

- Reduce the number of curb cuts. Encourage all parking to enter from side streets.
- Utilize Condit Street and the west Alley to create a vehicular access loop for additional parking along the trail.
- Support development of an active park along the trail.
- Widen the Kennedy Avenue right of way between LaPorte Street and Highway Avenue by ten feet to allow future extension of the medians in this section.
- Support on street parking on the west side of Kennedy Avenue as redevelopment occurs.
- Extend utilities and other infrastructures to promote redevelopment of the vacant land west of the R.R. track for business park development.
- Reconstruct sidewalks with parkways and corner plazas from the bridge to LaPorte Avenue.
- Widen Kennedy Avenue from Highway to Lincoln Avenue on the west by ten feet as redevelopment efforts progress??.

Streetscape Improvements

The existing character of the Downtown will require special consideration for pedestrian, bike, and car traffic. Future downtown street improvements should support the existing improvements while mixing the theme developed for the whole district. It is particularly critical that the public realm in downtown is expanded to include private areas and, where necessary, that the public and private realm is mixed to the extent possible. Landscaping, screening, bikeways, and pedestrian sidewalks and plazas all will need to support the concept of an 18-hour downtown with year round amenities. New improvements should promote strolling and walking while creating a unified, contiguous sense of place that stretches from the Downtown to other neighborhoods. Where possible, Kennedy Avenue also needs to support sufficient cross traffic for pedestrians patronizing all of downtown.



Streetscaping improvements proposed for the corridor include:

- Widen sidewalks and design a more attractive pedestrian walkway from Highway Avenue to Franklin Street.
- Develop cross walks at all intersections. Crosswalk design should conform in material and overall appearance of the street furnishings and sculpture themes adopted.
- Develop an end of the block plaza at Franklin and Garfield avenues as a part of the redevelopment efforts.
- Promote development of artistic amenities around the Theater.
- Design and construct corner plazas at all crossings with Kennedy Avenue.
- Promote installation of public art objects in every corner plaza.
- In cooperation with the neighborhood, develop parks at the end of the block as community and public spaces.
- Create a green landscape parkway with trees from LaPorte Avenue to Lincoln Avenue.
- Create a new civic space in Downtown for the southwest corner of Kennedy and Highway Avenues.
- Create gateway entry treatments on all major entrances to Downtown.
- Enhance the Ridge Road Bridge both on the top and under the viaduct with artistic objects or features.
- Extend the existing lighting system north on Kennedy Avenue to Franklin Street.
- Coordinate between agencies to incorporate street improvements efforts with streetscaping.

Wayfinding

Supporting signage that carries the theme or is closely related to the overall image should be supported for the district. Potential sites for directional signs could include:

- 5th Avenue, East
- 2nd Avenue, West
- Kennedy Avenue North
- Highway Avenue, off of Cline Avenue

